THE Intelligencer.

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O patria! o divum domus!

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The *Intelligencer.*

WHEN I Travel through any part of this unhappy Kingdom (and I have now by several Excursions, made from *Dublin*, gone thro' most Counties of it) it raises two Passions in my Breast of a different kind; An Indignation against those vile betrayers and Insulters of it, who Insinuate themselves into Favour, by saying, It is a Rich Nation; and a *sincere Compassion* for the Natives, who are sunk to the lowest Degree of Misery and Poverty, whose Houses are Dunghills, whose Victuals are the Blood of their Cattle, or the Herbs in the Field; and whose Cloathing to the Dishonour of God and Man is Nakedness. Yet Notwithstanding all these Dismal Appearances, it is the Common Phrase of an upstart Race of People, who have suddenly sprung up like the *Dragons* Teeth among us: That *Ireland was never known to be so Rich as it is now*; by which as I apprehend, they can only mean Themselves, for they have Skipt over the Channel from the Vantage Ground of a Dunghill upon no other Merit, either Visible or Divinable, than that of not having been born among us.

This is the Modern way of Planting Colonies — *Et ubi Solitudinem faciunt, id imperium vocant.* When those who are so unfortunate to be born here, are excluded from the meaneſt Preferments, and deem'd incapable of being entertain'd, even as common Soldiers, whose poor Stipend is but Four pence a Day. No Trade, no Emoluments, no Encouragement for Learning among the Natives, who yet by a perverse consequence are divided into Factions, with as much Violence, and Rancour, as if they had the Wealth of the *Indies* to contend for. It puts me in mind of a *Fable* which I Read in a *Monkish* Author. He quotes for it one

one of the *Greek Mythologists*. That once upon a Time a Colony of large Dogs (called the *Molossi*) Transplanted themselves from *Epirus* to *Æolia* where they seized those parts of the Countries, most fertile in Flesh of all kinds, obliging the Native Dogs to retire from their best Kennels, to live under Ditches and Bushes; But to preserve good Neighbourhood, and Peace, and finding likewise, that the *Æolian* Dogs might be of some use in the low Offices of Life, they passed a Decree, That the Natives should be entituled to the *Short-Ribs, Tips of Tails, Knuckle-Bones*, and Guts of all the Game, which they were obliged by their Masters to Run Down: This Condition was accepted, and what was a little Singular, while the *Molossian* Dogs kept a good understanding among themselves, living in Peace and Luxury, these *Æolian Curs* were perpetually snarling, grawling, barking, and tearing out each others Throats. Nay, sometimes those of the best Quality among them, were seen to Quarrel with as much Rancour for a Rotten Gut, as if it had been a fat haunch of Venison. But what need we wonder at this in *Dogs*, when the same is every Day practised among *Men*.

Last Year I Travelled from *Dublin* to *Dundalk*, thro' a Country esteemed the most Fruitful part of this Kingdom, and so Nature intended it. But no Ornaments or Improvements of such a Scene were visible. No Habitations fit for Gentlemen. No Farmers Houses. Few Fields of Corn, and almost a bare Face of Nature, without new Plantations of any kind, only a few miserable Cottages, at three or four Miles distance, and one Church in the Centre between this *City* and *Drogheda*. When I arriv'd at this last Town, the first mortifying Sight, was the Ruins of several Churches, batter'd down by that *Usurper Cromwell*, whose *Fanatick Zeal* made more Desolation in a few Days, than the Piety of succeeding Prelates, or the Wealth of the Town have, in more than sixty Years attempted to repair.

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Perhaps the Inhabitants, through a high ſtrain of Virtue, have in Imitation of the *Athenians* made a Solemn Reſolution, never to rebuild thoſe ſacred Edifices, but rather leave them in ruins, as Monuments, to perpetuate the deteſtable memory of that helliſh Inſtrument of Rebellion, Deſolation and Murther. For, the *Athenians* when *Mardonius* had ravaged a great part of *Greece* took a formal Oath at the *Iſthmus* to *loſe their Lives rather than their Liberty. To ſtand by their Leaders to the laſt. To ſpare the Cities of ſuch Barbarians as they conquered.* And, what crowned all, the Concluſion of their Oath was, *We will never repair any of the Temples, which they have burned and deſtroyed, that they may appear to Poſterity as ſo many Monuments of theſe wicked Barbarians.* This was a glorious Reſolution. And I am ſorry to think, that the Poverty of my Country-men will not let the world ſuppoſe, they have acted upon ſuch a generous Principle, yet upon this Occaſion I cannot but obſerve that there is a fatality in ſome Nations to be found of thoſe, who have treated them with the leaſt humanity. Thus I have often heard the memory of *Cromwell*, who has depopulated and almoſt wholly deſtroyed this miſerable Country, celebrated like that of a Saint; and at the ſame time the Sufferings of the Royal Martyr turned into Ridicule, and his Murder juſtifyed even from the Pulpit, and all this done with an intent to gain favour under a *Monarchy*, which is a new ſtrain of Politicks that I ſhall not pretend to account for.

Examin all the Eaſtern Towns of *Ireland*, and you will trace this horrid Inſtrument of Deſtruction, in the defacing of Churches, and particularly in deſtroying whatever was Ornamental, either within or without them. We ſee in the ſeveral Towns a very few Houſes ſcattered among the Ruins of thouſands, which he laid level with their Streets. Great Numbers of Caſtles! the Country Seats of Gentlemen then in Being, ſtill ſtanding in ruin, habitations for *Bats*, *Daws*, and *Owls*, without the leaſt Repairs or Succeſſion of

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other buildings. Nor have the Country Churches, as far as my Eye could reach, met with any better Treatment from him, nine in ten of them lying among their Graves, and God only knows when they are to have a Resurrection. When I passed from *Dundalk* where this cursed *Usurper's* handy-work is yet visible, I cast mine Eyes around from the Top of a Mountain, from whence I had a wide and a waste Prospect of several venerable Ruins; It struck me with a Melancholy, not unlike that expressed by *Cicero* in one of his Letters which being much upon the like Prospect, and concluding with a very necessary Reflection on the uncertainty of things in this World, I shall here insert a translation of what he says. *In my Return from* Asia, *as I Sailed from* Agina, *towards* Megara, *I began to take a prospect of the several Countries round about me. Behind me was* Agina: *Before me* Megara: *On the right Hand the* Piræus: *and on the left was* Corinth: *Which Towns were formerly in a most flourishing Condition; now they lye prostrate and in Ruin.*

Thus I began to think with my self. Shall we who have but a trifling Existence expose any resentment, when one of us either dies a natural Death, or is Slain, whose Lives are necessarily of a short Duration, when at one view I behold the Carcases of so many great Cities. What if he had seen the Natives of those free Republicks, reduced to all the miserable consequences of a conquered People, living without the common defences against Hunger *and Cold, rather appearing like Spectres than* Men? I am apt to think that seeing his Fellow-Creatures in Ruin like this, it would have put him past all patience for Philosophick Reflections.

As for my own Part, I confess, that the Sights and Occurrences which I had in this my last Journey, have so far transported me to a mixture of Rage and Compassion, that I am not able to decide, which has the greater Influence upon my Spirits; For this new Cant of *a rich and flourishing Nation*, was still uppermost in my Thoughts; Every Mile I travelled, giving

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me such ample Demonstrations to the Contrary. For this reason, I have been at the pains to render a most exact and faithful Account of all the visible Signs of Riches, which I met with in sixty Miles riding through the most publick Roads, and the best part of the Kingdom. First, As to Trade, I met nine Carrs loaden with old musty shrivel'd Hydes, one Car-load of Butter. Four Jockeys driving eight Horses, all out of Case. One Cow and Calf, driven by a Man and his Wife. Six tattered Families flitting to be shipped off to the *West-Indies*. A Colony of a hundred and fifty Beggars, all repairing to people our Metropolis, and by encreasing the number of Hands, to encrease it's Wealth, upon the old Maxim, that People are the Riches of a Nation. And therefore ten thousand Mouths with hardly ten pair of Hands, or any Work to employ them, will infallibly make us a rich, and flourishing People. Sadly, Travellers enough, but seven in ten wanting Shirts and Cravats; nine in ten going barefoot, and carrying their Brogues and Stockens in their Hands. One Woman in twenty having a Pillion, the rest riding bare-backed. Above two hundred Horsemen, with four pair of Boots amongst them all. Seventeen Saddles of Leather (the rest being made of Straw) and most of their Garrons only shod before. I went into one of the principal Farmer's Houses, out of Curiosity, and his whole Furniture consisted of two Blocks for Stools, a Bench on each side the Fire-place made of Turf, six Trenchers, one Bowl, a Pot, six Horn-Spoons, three Noggins, three Blankets, one of which served the Man and Maid Servant; the other the Master of the Family, his Wife and five Children. A small Churn, a wooden Candlestick, a broken Stick for a pair of Tongs. In the publick Towns, one third of the Inhabitants walking the Street barefoot, Windows half built up with Stone, to save the expence of Glass, the broken Panes up and down supplied by brown Paper, few being able to afford white, in some places they were stopped with Straw or Hay.

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Another mark of our Riches, are the Signs at the several Inns upon the Road, *viz.* In some a Staff stuck in the Thatch, with a Turf at the End of it; a Staff in a Dunghill with a white Rag wrapped about the Head; A Pole, where they can afford it, with a Besom at the Top. An Oatmeal Cake on a Board in a Window; And, at the principal Inns of the Road, I have observed the Signs taken down and laid against the Wall near the Door, being taken from their Post to prevent the shaking of the House down by the Wind. In short, I saw not one single House, in the best Town I travelled through, which had not manifest Appearances of Beggary and Want. I could give many more Instances of our Wealth, but I hope these will suffice for the End I propose.

It may be objected, What use it is of to display the Poverty of the Nation in the manner I have done. In answer, I desire to know for what Ends, and by what Persons, This new Opinion of our flourishing State has of late been so Industriously advanced. One thing is certain, that the Advancers have either already found their own Account, or have been heartily promised, or at least have been entertained with hopes, by seeing such an Opinion pleasing to those who have it in their power to reward.

It is no doubt a very generous principle in any Person, to rejoice in the felicities of a Nation, where themselves are Strangers, or Sojourners. But if it be found that the same Persons on all other Occasions express a hatred and contempt of the Nation and People in General, and hold it for a Maxim——*That the more such a Country is humbled, the more their own will rise.* It need be no longer a Secret, why such an Opinion and the Advancers of it are encouraged. And besides, if the Bayliff reports to his Master, that the Ox is Fat and Strong, when in reality it can hardly carry it's own Legs, is it not natural to think, that command will be given, for a greater load to be put upon it.

FINIS